

Mexico

Economic Watch

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Migration

Emigration patterns change, intensifying in the south-southeast region; traditional emigration hotspots in the centre and northwest become relatively less important

- South-southeastern states were among those who sent the majority of emigrants to the US in the five-year period between 2004 and 2009. Veracruz and Chiapas stood out as those providing the largest flow of emigrants over the last two decades.
- However, Michoacán was the state with the highest number of emigrants in the country between 2004 and 2009. Other states in the traditional emigration areas also became relatively less important, such as Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí, Jalisco, and Guanajuato.
- As a consequence, the national distribution of money transfers has changed.

Recently, the National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Computer Science (INEGI) and the National Population Council (Conapo) published the National Survey on Demographic Dynamics (ENADID) for 2009. The series of ENADID surveys, which was initiated in 1992, contains very useful information on population dynamics and makes it possible to identify emigration patterns.

The Conapo divides the national territory in four emigration regions: the traditional area, the north, the center, and the south-southeast region. In the June 2009 edition of **Migration Watch Mexico**¹ (*Situación Migración México*) we stated that the south-southeast region of Mexico (comprising Campeche, Chiapas, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, Tabasco, Veracruz, and Yucatan) was experiencing an increase in emigration over recent years. We also proposed some hypotheses to explain this behavioral trend.

Table 1:
Traditional emigration region–Population
 Percentage distribution of population emigrating to USA by Federal State, according to five-year period

	97-92	02-06	04-09
Total Nationwide	1,952,459	1,706,202	1,525,266
Michoacán	6.55	8.86	10.30
Guanajuato	11.33	10.69	8.30
Jalisco	14.34	6.09	7.99
Zacatecas	4.30	2.36	2.83
San Luis Potosí	5.67	2.98	2.54
Durango	4.99	3.50	1.77
Aguascalientes	1.77	1.71	1.28
Colima	0.60	1.03	0.83
Nayarit	2.06	2.25	0.77

Source: ENADID, 1997, 2006, and 2010

Table 2:
South-southeast region–Population
 Percentage distribution of population emigrating to USA by Federal State, according to five-year period

	97-92	02-06	04-09
Total Nationwide	1,952,459	1,706,202	1,525,266
Veracruz	2.4	8.2	8.6
Oaxaca	3.6	4.2	5.0
Guerrero	5.7	3.8	4.8
Chiapas	0.1	2.5	4.1
Yucatan	0.5	0.5	0.8
Tabasco	0.1	0.6	0.6
Quintana Roo	0.1	0.4	0.4
Campeche	0.1	0.3	0.4

Source: ENADID, 1997, 2006, and 2010

¹ Which you can consult at the following Web address:
 (http://www.gfmd2010mexico.org/gf_page.aspx?dir=revista&page=revista)

According to ENADID figures, some 1.525 million people emigrated from Mexico to the US in the 2004-2009 period. Four of the south-southeast region states (Veracruz, Oaxaca, Guerrero, and Chiapas) appear among the ten to have contributed the largest number of this total. This is in contrast to what happened in 1992-1997, as per data from the same study, when not a single one of the states in the south-southeast region appeared among the ten main emigration states. In that period only 13 percent of total emigration to the US originated in the states of the aforementioned region. For the 2001- 2006 five-year period the proportion rose to 21%, and for 2004-2009 it reached 25%.

Veracruz and Chiapas stood out as those providing the largest flow of emigrants over the last two decades both in absolute and relative terms according to ENADID. For example, over the 1992-1997 five-year period, the relative contribution of Chiapas and Veracruz was 0.1%, and 2.4% respectively, with the same figures rising to 4.1% and 8.6% respectively over the 2004-2009 period.

By contrast, in the traditional emigration region including the states of Michoacán, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí, Durango, Aguascalientes, Colima, and Nayarit, emigration levels have relatively decreased, although this region continues to provide the largest proportion of emigrants nationwide. In the 1992-1997 period, 52% of the emigrants who left for the US were from this region, but this figure dropped to 37% over the 2004-2009 period. States such as Guanajuato, Jalisco, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosí, have seen a decrease of their relative contributions to the numbers of those emigrating from the traditional region. Michoacán is the locality from this region in which most emigration activity has been recorded, being the state that sent the most people to the US during the 2004-2009 period.

The north region comprising Chihuahua, Baja California, Nuevo León, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tamaulipas, Coahuila, and Baja California Sur did not, in general, show significant changes in its relative contribution to emigration between the various five-year periods. A similar observation is made with the region comprising Puebla, Hidalgo, the Federal District of Mexico, Querétaro, Morelos, and Tlaxcala.

Changes in emigration patterns have been reflected in the distribution of money transfers per federal state. In 1955, the states of the traditional emigration region received 53% of the transfers received nationwide; for 2009, this figure fell to 39%. For its part, the south-southeast region saw an increase in the proportion of money transfers it received from 14% to 22% for the same years. Meanwhile, the country's central states saw the proportion of transfers they received increase from 23% to 28%, and the northern states from 11% to 12%.

Table 3:
Traditional emigration region—Money transfers
Percentage distribution of money transfers to Mexico by federal state

	1995	2003	2009
Total			
Nationwide			
(Millions of dollars)	3,673	15,041	21,181
Michoacan	16.25	11.83	10.07
Guanajuato	10.25	9.33	9.18
Jalisco	12.70	8.95	8.10
Zacatecas	3.12	2.66	2.69
San Luis Potosi	3.26	2.64	2.98
Durango	2.08	1.76	1.80
Aguascalientes	3.11	1.73	1.33
Colima	0.60	1.60	0.82
Nayarit	1.57	1.53	1.64

Source: Banxico and Conapo

Table 4:
South-southeast region—Money transfers
Percentage distribution of money transfers to Mexico by federal state

	1995	2003	2009
Total			
Nationwide			
(Millions of dollars)	3,673	15,041	21,181
Veracruz	2.07	6.58	6.11
Oaxaca	4.34	5.12	5.68
Guerrero	6.11	5.62	5.43
Chiapas	0.54	0.95	2.86
Yucatan	0.31	0.40	0.50
Tabasco	0.13	0.58	0.55
Quintana Roo	0.09	0.36	0.41
Campeche	0.10	0.35	0.27

Source: Banxico and Conapo

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